

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HELSIN 01082 120946Z
ACTION EUR-12

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UNCLAS HELSINKI 1082

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEF, SW, FI, UR
SUBJECT: FINNISH POLICY ISSUE REPORT ON VIOLATION OF FINNISH-
SOVIET BORDER BY SWEDISH PILOT: FINNISH FOREIGN MINISTRY
EXPRESSES REGRETS TO SOVIET EMBASSY

REF: STOCKHOLM 1369

1. SUMMARY: THE FINNISH CENTRAL CRIMINAL POLICE ISSUED A REPORT
ON THE EVENING OF APRIL 7 CONCERNING THE INCIDENT REPORTED IN
REFTEL. THE POLICY REPORT OFFICIALLY CONFIRMED THAT THE
PURPOSE OF THE FLIGHT WAS TO TAKE MEMBERS OF THE AGAPOV
FAMILY FROM THE SOVIET UNION TO SWEDEN VIA FINLAND. TWO
SWEDES ARE BEING HELD FOR FURTHER INTERROGATION AS THE
INVESTIGATION BY THE FINNISH POLICE CONTINUES. THE FINNISH
FOREIGN MINISTRY ON APRIL 7 EXPRESSED ITS REGRETS TO
THE SOVIET EMBASSY FOR THE BORDER VIOLATION BY THE SWEDISH
AIRPLANE. FINNISH PRESS RELIED PRIMARILY ON THE SWEDISH
PRESS FOR NEWS CONCERNING THE INCIDENT UNTIL THE ISSUANCE
OF THE FINNISH POLICE REPORT. END SUMMARY

2. A FINNISH CENTRAL CRIMINAL POLICE REPORT ISSUED
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APRIL 7 HAS CONFIRMED THE EFFORT TO SMUGGLE THE FAMILY OF
VALENTIN AGAPOV FROM THE SOVIET UNION TO SWEDEN VIA
FINLAND. POLICE ARE HOLDING KARL-GORAN WICKENBERGH, 34,
AND PER GUNNAR NYSTROM, 24, FOR FURTHER INTERROGATION
WHILE THE INVESTIGATION CONTINUES. POLICE OFFICIALS TOLD
REPORTERS THAT THE SWEDES ARE BEING HELD ON A DAY-TO-DAY
BASIS UNTIL THE INVESTIGATION HAS REACHED A STAGE WHERE A

DECISION CAN BE MADE ON CHARGES. THE MATTER MUST COME UP AT THE LOCAL COURT IN IMATRA NO LATER THAN 17 DAYS AFTER THE ARREST.

3. ACCORDING TO THE POLICE REPORT, WICKENBERGH AND NYSTROM LEFT ON THURSDAY, MARCH 30, FROM UMEA, SWEDEN, IN A PIPER PA-18-150 AIRPLANE FOR FINLAND WHERE THEY LANDED FIRST IN VAASA AND THEN AT IMMOLA AIRPORT NEAR THE EASTERN FRONTIER. THE SWEDES STAYED IN VUOKSENNISKA AT HOTEL NISKAHOVI. WICKENBERGH INTRODUCED HIMSELF AS GORAN ERICSSON ON THE VISITOR'S CARD OF THE HOTEL. TWO SWEDISH JOURNALISTS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS CAME TO THE HOTEL ON FRIDAY. IT IS PROBABLE THAT VALENTIN AGAPOV, WHO LIVES IN SWEDEN, ALSO ARRIVED IN THE EVENING.

4. THE POLICE REPORT STATES THAT WICKENBERGH TOOK OFF ALONG FROM THE AIRFIELD IN IMMOLA SATURDAY, APRIL 1, AT 0520 HOURS. ACCORDING TO VISUAL OBSERVATIONS HE CROSSED THE SOVIET FRONTIER AT LAKE HIIENJARVI IN RAUTJARVI. WICKENBERGH SAID HE LANDED ON A LAKE NORTH-WEST OF KAKISALMI (PRIOZERSK) IN THE SOVIET UNION. AFTER ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES WICKENBERGH TOOK OFF AGAIN. HE RECROSSED THE FRONTIER INTO FINLAND 15 KILOMETERS TO THE NORTH IN ANKILANSALO, RAUTJARVI, AT 0720 HOURS. WICKENBERGH MADE AN INTERMEDIATE LANDING ON LAKE KARINKIJARVI IN FINLAND NEAR THE FRONTIER AND THEN FLEW TO IMMOLA, UNCLASSIFIED

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LANDING AT 0800 HOURS. EYE-WITNESSES HAD SEEN TWO CARS DRIVING ON THE ICE ON KARINKIJARVI LAKE JUST AT THE TIME OF THE INTERMEDIATE LANDING. WICKENBERGH WAS ARRESTED IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARDS IN HOTEL NISKAHOVI. THE POLICE ARRESTED NYSTROM LATER THE SAME MORNING. CONTRARY TO EARLIER RUMORS, THE POLICE REPORT SAID NO BULLET HOLES WERE FOUND IN THE AIRPLANE.

5. WICKENBERGH TOLD POLICE THAT HIS INTENTION HAD BEEN TO HELP AGAPOV'S WIFE, DAUGHTER AND MOTHER TO GET OUT OF THE SOVIET UNION. HE SAID HE HAD RECEIVED FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM A SWEDISH NEWSPAPER FOR HIS EFFORT. THE POLICE REPORT MENTIONS THAT WICKENBERGH HAD BEEN SEEN FLYING ANOTHER PIPER AIRPLANE IN THE LAPPEENRANTA-VUOKSENNISKA AREA DURING THE PERIOD MARCH 10-19.

6. WICKENBERGH DID NOT HAVE A FLIGHT CERTIFICATE ISSUED BY ANY COUNTRY. HE IS EXPECTED TO BE CHARGED WITH VIOLATIONS OF AVIATION AND FRONTIER LAWS AND DRUNKEN FLYING. ACCORDING TO POLICE OFFICIALS, WICKENBERGH COULD RECEIVE UP TO FOUR YEAR IMPRISONMENT FOR HIS ACTS.

7. THE FINNISH FOREIGN MINISTRY PRESENTED ITS REGRETS
TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY ON APRIL 7 FOR THE INDICENT CAUSED
BY THE SWEDSIH AIRPLANE.

8. THE FINNISH PRESS HAS REPORTED EXTENSIVELY ON THE
INCIDENT BUT UNTIL THE ISSUANCE OF THE FORMAL POLICE
REPORT RELIED HEAVILY ON THE SWEDISH PRESS FOR ITS INFORMA-
TION. THE COMMENT BY A FINNISH OFFICIAL, REPORTED IN THE
REFTEL, THAT THIS IS THE MOST SERIOUS VIOLATION OF
FINNISH BORDERS SINCE THE WAR, HAS BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO
THE ASSISTANT CHIEF OF THE FRONTIER GUARD, MAJOR GENERAL
AARNE SIHVO. ONE FINNISH NEWSPAPER, THE CENTER PARTY
SUOMENMAA, HAS CALLED UPON SWEDEN TO EXPRESS APOLOGIES TO
BOTH FINLAND AND THE SOVIET UNION.
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RIDGWAY

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